

REMARKS

Claims 2-15 were pending in the present application. Claim 5 has been withdrawn by the Examiner. By virtue of this response, claims 3-12 and 15 have been canceled. Accordingly, claims 2, 13 and 14 are currently under consideration. Amendment and cancellation of certain claims is not to be construed as a dedication to the public of any of the subject matter of the claims as previously presented. No new matter has been added.

Elections/Restrictions

The Examiner has withdrawn claim 5 from consideration as being directed to a non-elected invention.

Claim 5 has been canceled without prejudice.

Claim Objections

The Examiner noted omission of a period in claim 15. Applicant thanks the Examiner for pointing out the omission. Claim 15 has been canceled as described below.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

Claims 3-4 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by Ohyama (6,366,548).

Claims 3-4 have been canceled without prejudice.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claim 6 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Kajiyama et al. (WO 00/36597).

Claim 6 has been canceled without prejudice.

Claim 15 is also rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Kajiyama et al.

Claim 15 has been canceled without prejudice.

In addition, claims 7-8, are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Kajiyama et al.

Claims 7-8 have been canceled without prejudice.

Claims 9-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Kajiyama et al. in view of Nakanishi et al. (5,748,658).

Claims 9-12 have been canceled without prejudice.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner has allowed claims 2, 13-14.

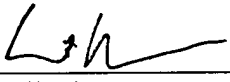
CONCLUSION

In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to pass this application to issue. If it is determined that a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number given below.

In the event the U.S. Patent and Trademark office determines that an extension and/or other relief is required, applicant petitions for any required relief including extensions of time and authorizes the Commissioner to charge the cost of such petitions and/or other fees due in connection with the filing of this document to **Deposit Account No. 03-1952** referencing docket no. **275412001900**. However, the Commissioner is not authorized to charge the cost of the issue fee to the Deposit Account.

Dated: April 6, 2006

Respectfully submitted,

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